



The Huntsville Times

Alabama launches spa trail

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5 sites offer guests pampering, treatments in special settings

Alabama's Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail has brought the state national recognition. Now there's another new, more laid-back trail concept: spas.

Five spas across the state are part of the newly designated Robert Trent Jones Spa Trail.

"From traditional warm stone massages to caviar facials, the RTJ Spa Trail features five spas across Alabama offering innovative treatments in exquisite settings," said Steve Solberg, president and CEO of PCH Hotels & Resorts.

Owned by the Retirement Systems of Alabama, the RTJ Spa Trail is part of the Robert Trent Jones Golf Trail's Resort Collection that spans the state. Spas are located in Marriott and Renaissance Hotels in Point Clear, Mobile, Montgomery, Hoover and Florence. All locations have earned Four Diamond ratings by AAA.

"We currently are tied with Hawaii in the number of quality spas recognized by BestSpasUSA and we still have two more to be reviewed," Solberg said.

The concept should appeal to both leisure travelers and business travelers, he said.

Spa treatments may seem a luxury these days, but then again, maybe it's the right time to be pampered a bit. The hotels they're in are some of the nicest in the state.

"Named as the top value for golf by Golf Digest in 2008, the Trail and its resorts offer affordable meeting and getaway options at a time when we can certainly use one," Solberg said in a press release.

A new "trail card" gives people discounts and freebies.

For more information on the RTJ Spa Trail, the Resort Collection and the RTJ Golf Trail, visit www.pchresorts.com or www.rtjgolf.com.

Where they are

The Spa at the Grand: Grand Hotel Marriott Resort, Golf Club and Spa in Point Clear on 550 scenic acres along Mobile Bay. Details: 20,000-square-foot spa, nine treatment rooms, open daily.

Phone: 251-990-6385

Signature treatments: aromatic warm stone massage, mosaic body experience, nail experience, Grand Spa facial

Most unusual: Ashiatsu barefoot massage

The Spa at the Battle House: At The Battle House, a Renaissance Hotel and Spa in downtown Mobile, with a view of downtown and Mobile Bay. Details: 10,000 square feet, eight treatment rooms, open daily.

Phone: 251-338-5700

Signature treatments: aromatic warm stone massage, organic facial, urban foot rejuvenation

Most unusual: Hungarian mud wrap

The Spa at Montgomery: Renaissance Montgomery Hotel and Spa at the Convention Center, with spa services from around the world. Details: 9,000 square feet, seven rooms, open Tuesday-Saturday and by appointment Sunday-Monday.

Phone: 334-481-5210

Signature treatments: facial, resurfacing pedicure, glycoderm facial

Most unusual: "Mysterious Turkish Massage"

The Spa at Ross Bridge: Renaissance Ross Bridge Golf Resort and Spa in Hoover. Details: 12,000 square feet, 10 rooms, open daily.

Phone: 205-949-3041

Signature treatments: massage, lavender body treatment, hot oil scalp massage and back exfoliation

Most unusual: combination steam table and Vichy shower

The Spa at the Shoals: Marriott Shoals Hotel and Spa in Florence, on the banks of the Tennessee River. Details: 6,000 square feet, four rooms, couples room, open daily.

Phone: 256-246-3696

Signature treatments: nourishing body service and aromatherapy massage

Most unusual: "Diamonds are Forever" facial

RTJ Spa Trail Card

Cost: \$40

Benefits: \$20 gift card for any of the five spas, 25 percent off spa services, room rates and spa products, 10 percent off hotel food and beverages. Free make-up touch-up or paraffin dip for hands or feet, glass of wine after treatment and use of spa the day or before after treatment for hotel guests. Those who have services at each spa and get the card stamped will get another free \$100 value treatment.

How to get it: At any spa location or by calling the spa directly. Good for one year.

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